



BEYOND BASIC PAY

Service members who reside in the local community surrounding their duty stations are free to obtain housing based on their personal choice.

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING (BAH) OVERVIEW

BAH helps Service members afford a safe, decent place to live.



WHAT IS BAH?

BAH is a non-taxable allowance that helps eligible Service members pay for housing costs.

KEY FACTS

- ✓ BAH is not the same across the country. Rates change by location.
- ✓ Your BAH rate is based on your pay grade, dependency status, and where you live.
- ✓ Rates are reviewed every year.
- ✓ Over 16,000 BAH rates are set based on real housing market data.
- ✓ By law, annual adjustments to BAH rates are effective on the first day of January of each year.
- ✓ BAH is intended to cover approximately 95% of typical local civilian housing rental costs.
- ✓ BAH reflects median local costs and rent, not home purchases.

HOW BAH RATES ARE SET



1. Data Collection

DoW gathers rental data for homes and apartments in military housing areas (MHAs) across the U.S.



2. Quality Standards

Only quality housing that meets DoW's standards is used. Homes in disrepair, subsidized units, and extreme outliers are not included.



3. Data Analysis

DoW uses trusted surveys and expert analysis to find the average cost of adequate housing for each area.



4. Rate Calculation

DoW sets rates for each pay grade (with and without dependents) using a standard formula to keep it fair nationwide.



WHAT BAH COVERS

- Rent for a home or apartment
- Utilities (average cost of electricity, heat, water, and sewer expenses)



BAH is not meant to cover luxury costs. It is based on average, modest housing.



WHO GETS BAH?

Eligible Service members get BAH when they:

- Live off an installation
- Are not provided government housing or quarters



Your BAH can change if your pay grade, location, or dependency status changes.



WHY IT MATTERS

- Find a safe and decent place to live
- Cover the real cost of housing in your area
- Focus on your mission—knowing your housing needs are supported



BAH rates are set by law to be fair and consistent for all Service members.



STAY INFORMED. PLAN AHEAD.

Visit your Service's official site or talk to your command for more information about BAH and other benefits.



Learn more at
<https://go.mil/comp-ed>